United Nations E/ESCAP/RES/70/1

Economic and Social Council

Distr.: Limited
13 June 2014

Original: English

Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

Seventieth session
Agenda item 3(a)

Resolution adopted by the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

70/1. Implementation of the Bangkok Declaration on Regional Economic Cooperation and Integration in Asia and the Pacific

The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific,

Recalling its resolution 68/10, in which it decided to convene the Asia-Pacific Ministerial Conference on Regional Economic Integration in 2013,

Welcoming the successful outcome of the Ministerial Conference on Regional Economic Cooperation and Integration in Asia and the Pacific, held in Bangkok from 17 to 20 December 2013,[1]

1. *Endorses* the Bangkok Declaration on Regional Economic Cooperation and Integration in Asia and the Pacific, as contained in the annex to the present resolution;

2. *Requests* the Executive Secretary:

(a) To accord priority to the implementation of the recommendations of the Bangkok Declaration on Regional Economic Cooperation and Integration in Asia and the Pacific;

(b) To assist members and associate members in setting up and supporting the work of the four area-specific expert working groups in accordance with section II, paragraphs 3 and 6(b), of the Bangkok Declaration;

(c) To convene in 2015 the intergovernmental open-ended preparatory meetings for the second Ministerial Conference on Regional Economic Cooperation and Integration in Asia and the Pacific mentioned in section II, paragraph 3, of the Bangkok Declaration;

(d) To convene the second Ministerial Conference on Regional Economic Cooperation and Integration in Asia and the Pacific in 2015 to review the progress on the agenda of regional economic integration outlined in section III of the present Declaration, consider the recommendations of the

[1] See E/ESCAP/70/7.

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intergovernmental open-ended preparatory meetings and decide on follow-up actions, as expressed in section II, paragraph 6(d), of the Bangkok Declaration;

(e) To report to the Commission at its seventy-first and seventy-second sessions on the implementation of the present resolution.

Second plenary meeting
23 May 2014

B14-000580

Annex

Bangkok Declaration on Regional Economic Cooperation and Integration in Asia and the Pacific

I. Preamble

We, the Ministers and representatives of members and associate members of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific attending the Ministerial Conference on Regional Economic Cooperation and Integration in Asia and the Pacific, held in Bangkok from 17 to 20 December 2013,

Emphasizing the need to sustain the region's inclusive and sustainable development to continue to reduce the number of poor people living in absolute poverty from the current levels and to close the development gaps across countries,

Reaffirming the unique role of the Commission as the most representative body for the Asian and Pacific region and its comprehensive mandate as the main economic and social development centre of the United Nations system for the Asian and Pacific region,

Recalling the First Ministerial Conference on Asian Economic Cooperation, which was held in Manila in 1963 under the auspices of the Commission and led to the establishment of the Asian Development Bank,

Also recalling important contributions of the Commission to regional economic cooperation and integration, as highlighted in its resolution 68/10 on enhancing regional economic integration in Asia and the Pacific, and noting other important regional economic cooperation and integration initiatives in the Asia-Pacific region,

Further recalling that the Commission in its resolution 68/10 requested the Executive Secretary to support the convening of the First Asia-Pacific Ministerial Conference on Regional Economic Integration in 2013, marking the fiftieth anniversary of the First Ministerial Conference on Asian Economic Cooperation, and to review the theme study for the sixty-eighth session of the Commission, entitled *Growing Together: Economic Integration for an Inclusive and Sustainable Asia-Pacific Century*,[a, b]

Recalling Commission resolution 69/10 on promoting regional information and communications technology connectivity and building knowledge-networked societies in Asia and the Pacific,

Also recalling General Assembly resolutions 64/186 and 67/194 on building connectivity through the Trans-Eurasian Information Super Highway and 67/298 on developing cooperation for better connectivity and telecommunications transit routes in the Trans-Eurasian region,

Recognizing the important role of safe, efficient, clean, reliable and affordable transport systems in supporting sustainable economic growth, improving social welfare of people and enhancing regional integration in Asia and the Pacific,

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[a] ST/ESCAP/2629.

[b] See also E/ESCAP/68/22.

Also recognizing that, given the vast land mass, oceans and diversity of the Asian and Pacific region, land-based and sea-based fibre-optic cable networks and satellites play a critical role in developing a seamless regional information space,

Further recognizing that, in the context of economic uncertainties after the global financial and economic crisis and with the rising economic prominence of the Asia-Pacific region in the world economy, the promotion of intraregional trade within Asia and the Pacific can provide enormous opportunities to support economic growth and employment creation in the region,

Reaffirming the imperatives of sustainable development, reducing poverty and inequalities, increasing the resilience of our economies to natural and economic disasters and the effects of climate change, sustainable management of natural resources, enhancing food and energy security, closing the digital divide and reducing development gaps across countries to enhance social cohesion,

Emphasizing that fostering trade, investment, and economic and development cooperation among countries in Asia and the Pacific can create opportunities not only for supporting economic growth, but also for achieving wider developmental objectives,

Noting that improving connectivity with regard to land, river, sea and air transport as well as energy and information and communications technology infrastructure, as well as trade facilitation, is critical to boost trade, investment and the movement of people among countries,

Emphasizing the need to substantially enhance the degree of connectivity in the region, including through investment in transport, energy and information and communications technology infrastructure, and through improvements in trade and transport facilitation,

Recalling Commission resolution 69/6 on the implementation of the Tehran Declaration to promote public-private partnerships in infrastructure development in Asia and the Pacific for sustainable development,

Emphasizing the need to develop existing, evolving and innovative national, regional and global partnerships to help members and associate members address the challenges and seize the opportunities associated with growing populations, the demographic dividend, internal and international migration, and urbanization,

Noting the urgent need to increase the availability of and access to financing for regional infrastructure projects, especially those that link least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States with each other and with other economies in Asia and the Pacific, including through facilitating transit transportation to seaports,

Also noting with satisfaction the adoption of the Suva Declaration on Improving Maritime Transport and Related Services in the Pacific,[c] which is aimed at improving the economic feasibility of the provision of regular and predictable inter-island shipping services in the Pacific subregion,

[c] See E/ESCAP/FAMT(2)/6.

(b) The development of seamless connectivity across the region in the areas of transport, energy and information and communications technology, among others, including through the full realization of key regional initiatives;

(c) Enhancing financial cooperation for, among other things, closing infrastructure gaps across countries in the region and exploring the possibility of providing liquidity support;

(d) Increasing economic and technical cooperation to address shared vulnerabilities and risks;

2. *Agree* to pursue the agenda for such cooperation as outlined in section III of the present Declaration as an important step towards realizing a broad long-term vision of an economic community of Asia and the Pacific;

3. *Decide* to create four area-specific expert working groups to take stock of current regional efforts pertaining to economic cooperation and integration, to identify gaps in those efforts, to recommend concrete actions to make progress in each of the four areas listed in operative paragraph 1 above, and to submit their recommendations to intergovernmental open-ended preparatory meetings to be convened for the second Ministerial Conference on Regional Economic Cooperation and Integration in Asia and the Pacific to take place in 2015;

4. *Agree* to assist countries with special needs, especially least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States, in taking advantage of opportunities arising from regional economic cooperation and integration, including, as appropriate, through support to enhance their capacities and through technical assistance;

5. *Invite* members and associate members of the Commission, donor countries, multilateral financing institutions, relevant agencies and organizations of the United Nations system, other intergovernmental and regional organizations, relevant non-governmental organizations, international think tanks and the private sector to provide financial and technical support, within their mandates and core competencies, for the implementation of the agenda for regional economic cooperation and integration;

6. *Request* the Executive Secretary:

(a) To accord high priority to the agenda for regional economic cooperation and integration in the work of ESCAP;

(b) To support the work of the four area-specific expert working groups including the preparation of their terms of reference in consultation with members and associate members and convene the intergovernmental open-ended preparatory meetings for the second Ministerial Conference on Regional Economic Cooperation and Integration in Asia and the Pacific referred to in operative paragraph 3 above;

(c) To ensure effective coordination with United Nations and multilateral agencies concerned, including relevant subregional technical organizations within their respective mandates and core competencies, in supporting the implementation of the regional economic cooperation and integration agenda;

(d) To convene the second Ministerial Conference on Regional Economic Cooperation and Integration in Asia and the Pacific in 2015 to review the progress on the agenda of regional economic integration outlined in section III of the present Declaration, consider the recommendations of the intergovernmental open-ended preparatory meetings and decide on follow-up actions.

III. Suggested agenda for regional economic cooperation and integration in Asia and the Pacific

1. The agenda for regional economic cooperation and integration is aimed at deepening and broadening economic cooperation and integration in Asia and the Pacific and at moving towards the formation of an economic community of Asia and the Pacific as a long-term goal.

2. Recognizing the important progress achieved by regional groupings and organizations in integrating their subregions, the agenda is designed to support their efforts and further strengthen their contribution as building blocks of a broader regional initiative. For this purpose, the subregional offices of the secretariat could provide support to and liaise with the subregional groupings in their respective subregions within their respective mandates.

3. In order to promote and facilitate opportunities for mutual learning and coordination among regional groupings and organizations, including their sectoral cooperation initiatives, ESCAP could facilitate consultations among such groupings and organizations at the annual sessions of the Commission for the purpose of discussing progress in economic cooperation and integration in ESCAP subregions, sharing best practices and considering ways to enhance economic cooperation and integration among the subregions.

4. It is important to recognize that challenges generally associated with least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States, such as small market sizes, geographic limitations and absence of relevant trade infrastructure, reduce the impact of regional cooperation and integration initiatives that are meant to enhance trade, market development and improve economic growth. In order to broaden the access of those countries to regional trade and connectivity, there is a need to implement specific policies that focus on productive capacity-building related to infrastructure development, broadening the economic base, access to finance and providing assistance in overcoming the risks and shocks of entering into a regional trade block.

5. The second Ministerial Conference on Regional Economic Cooperation and Integration in Asia and the Pacific, which is proposed to be held in 2015, will take stock of the progress made on the agenda of cooperation and integration agreed at the First Ministerial Conference and consider the recommendations of the area-specific expert working groups established by it.

A. Moving towards the formation of an integrated market

6. In order to exploit complementarities between subregions, it is critical to move towards an integrated market of Asian and Pacific economies. One of the four area-specific expert working groups will

explore the possible options for building an integrated market of the Asian and Pacific region in an inclusive and equitable manner.[e]

7. Recognizing the importance of trade for growth and development, members and associate members will strive to foster trade facilitation, bring down trade barriers through cooperation on liberalization, and resist and refrain from protectionism.

8. It is necessary to recognize the importance of migration flows for tackling structural labour demand and supply mismatches across countries and the critical developmental role that remittances play. In this context, it is also necessary to enhance regional consultations to address the protection of rights of migrant workers in accordance with internationally agreed principles, as appropriate, as well as applicable national laws, regulations and policies.

9. Intraregional tourism, which has been growing in Asia and the Pacific as a consequence of the region's progress in raising standards of living and reducing poverty, could help spur development in least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States in the region. However, the development of the tourism sector is highly dependent on the existence of efficient, regular and affordable air services connecting recipient and source countries. Regional cooperation in this area is particularly important in order to support these countries in promoting the development of their tourism sectors.

B. The development of seamless connectivity in the region

10. In order to strengthen seamless transport connectivity in the region, it is essential, as appropriate, to implement the Ministerial Declaration on Transport Development in Asia and the Pacific,[f] and the Regional Action Programme for Transport Development in Asia and the Pacific, phase II (2012-2016),[g] the Regional Strategic Framework for the Facilitation of International Road Transport,[h] the Ministerial Declaration on Transport as a Key to Sustainable Development and Regional Integration,[i] and the Suva Declaration on Improving Maritime Transport and Related Services in the Pacific.[j] It is also important for ESCAP members and associate members that have not already done so, to consider becoming parties to the Intergovernmental Agreement on the Asian Highway Network,[k] the Intergovernmental Agreement on the Trans-Asian Railway Network[l] and the Intergovernmental Agreement on Dry Ports.[m]

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[e] The word "equitable" refers to the principle of special and differential treatment in favour of weaker economies, as included in the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT).

[f] Commission resolution 68/4, annex.

[g] Ibid., appendix I.

[h] Ibid., appendix II.

[i] See E/ESCAP/FAMT(2)/7, chap. I, sect. A.

[j] See E/ESCAP/FAMT(2)/6.

[k] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 2323, No. 41607.

[l] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 2596, No. 46171.

[m] Commission resolution 69/7, annex.

11. In view of the critical importance of the connectivity agenda, one of the four area-specific expert working groups will take a closer look at cross-sectoral synergies among transport, energy and information and communications technology (ICT) infrastructure and make recommendations.

12. The Asian and Pacific Energy Forum could address the need to develop energy connectivity by facilitating the evolution of an "Asian energy highway", including oil and gas pipelines and grid connections across borders, to exploit demand-supply mismatches among countries and to further develop a regional energy market and a Pacific regional energy data repository for sustainable energy for all. In view of the importance of energy cooperation for the energy security of the region, the Forum could consider means of implementing a review mechanism for its recommendations. The Forum could also enhance cooperation among energy-producing, transit and energy-consuming countries for the sustainable use of resources.

13. Improved ICT connectivity and the reduction of the digital divide may require enhanced cooperation at the regional and subregional levels in such activities as entering into public-private partnerships, exploring new opportunities emerging from technological innovations and connectivity and supporting the development of regional initiatives for ICT connectivity set forth in Commission resolution 69/10 in order to provide seamless broadband connectivity and reduce the costs of such connectivity for all throughout Asia and the Pacific. Improved regional cooperation on ICT issues could also promote policies that maximize the economic and social benefits of improved ICT connectivity, while mitigating the common challenges and threats raised by new and continuously evolving technologies.

C. Enhancing financial cooperation

14. It is important to recognize the large potential for cooperation in finance in order to develop the region's capital markets and a regional financial architecture to facilitate the mobilization of financial resources for meeting the need for liquidity support and trade finance and to close the infrastructure gaps. One of the four area-specific expert working groups could examine ways and means of exploiting the potential of financial cooperation in Asia and the Pacific, including considering options suggested in paragraph 5(f) of Commission resolution 69/6 on the implementation of the Tehran Declaration to promote public-private partnership in infrastructure development in Asia and the Pacific for sustainable development.

D. Increasing economic cooperation to address shared vulnerabilities, risks and challenges

15. One of the four area-specific expert working groups could explore ways and means to foster regional cooperation for addressing shared vulnerabilities, risks and challenges, including the measures discussed in the following paragraphs.

16. The establishment of an Asian and Pacific agricultural research and innovation network could be considered to serve as a regional knowledge network aimed at addressing sustainable productivity increases and encouraging responsible investment in sustainable small-scale farming, agro-industries and rural development.

17. Regional and subregional food banks, such as that created by the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations' ASEAN-Plus-Three Emergency Rice Reserve, could be strengthened. It is important for countries to share information on food stocks and to facilitate food trade through information-sharing related to sanitary and phytosanitary and other food safety standards, agricultural good practices and trading opportunities.

18. The Zero Hunger Challenge[a] could provide a guideline for regional cooperation in the area of food security. Regional cooperation is particularly necessary to assist countries with special needs, such as least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States.

19. While increased connectivity facilitates cross-border flows of trade and investment, it also raises the risks of transboundary shocks, which could have serious impacts on social, economic and environmental infrastructure and processes across countries of the region and could lead to systemic failures. In that context, it is important to recognize the role of relevant mechanisms for regional cooperation and coordination and in facilitating the sharing of best practices across the subregions.

20. The role of regional cooperation in ICT and space technologies for the monitoring of hazards and the assessment of vulnerabilities, exposures and risks should be recognized. Regional cooperation, such as through the Regional Space Applications Programme for Sustainable Development and regional disaster management support systems, such as Sentinel Asia, could also help members and associate members mainstream disaster risk reduction into their development planning, formulate disaster-resilient recovery and reconstruction measures and take into account disaster risks in their land use planning.

21. The pooling of space-based information and ground support as well as communication systems for monitoring and early warning at the regional level should be considered in order to address multiple hazards and cut across geographical boundaries through the sharing of data, information and best practices between national and subregional early warning systems. In this context, it is important to strengthen the Regional Integrated Multi-hazard Early Warning System for Africa and Asia (RIMES).

22. As the scarcity of natural resources is becoming a constraint to the growth of Asian and Pacific economies, there is a need for appropriate and efficient pooling of resources and coordination at the regional and subregional levels with the objective of fostering research and development regarding (a) the conservation of natural resources, including oceans and energy, (b) climate change adaptation and mitigation and (c) the development of environmentally friendly technologies up to the pre-competitive stage. This could be achieved through greater coordination among national innovation agencies in Asian and Pacific countries and through the establishment of regional innovation centres for different core technologies. The role of ESCAP regional institutions, such as the Asian and Pacific Centre for Transfer of Technology, the Asian and Pacific Training Centre for Information and Communication Technology for Development, the Centre for Alleviation of Poverty through Sustainable Agriculture, and the Centre for Sustainable Agricultural Mechanization, needs to be recognized in this respect.

[a] See www.un.org/en/zerohunger.

23. A number of members and associate members of the Commission are highly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, such as the contamination of freshwater tables by rising levels of seawater, the increased frequency and severity of cyclones, rising of sea levels and the melting of snow caps resulting in flash floods and outburst of glacier lakes. These impacts expose them to the risk of suffering significant damage to their physical infrastructure and productive capacity, which could strain government resources and exacerbate development challenges. Sharing of experiences and best practices among members and associate members to build resilience to the impacts of climate change is thus highly desirable. Members and associate members underline the urgency for enhancing the means of implementation to combat the adverse impacts of climate change in this region in accordance with internationally agreed mandates.

United Nations E/ESCAP/RES/70/2

Economic and Social Council

Distr.: Limited
13 June 2014

Original: English

Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

Seventieth session
Agenda item 10

Resolution adopted by the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

70/2. Disaster-related statistics in Asia and the Pacific

The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific,

Reaffirming the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, entitled "The future we want", in particular the decisions related to disaster risk reduction and the role of the regional commissions in supporting member States and the development agenda,[1]

Recalling General Assembly resolution 67/209 on the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, in which the Assembly requested the regional commissions, within their mandates, to support the efforts of Member States to achieve disaster risk reduction as part of the implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters,[2]

Also recalling General Assembly resolution 68/211 on the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, in which the Assembly: (a) encouraged the further implementation of all priorities for action of the Hyogo Framework for Action, including the establishment of reliable disaster statistics; (b) set out the objectives of the Third United Nations World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, to be held in Sendai, Japan, from 14 to 18 March 2015, among which was the completion of the assessment and review of the implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action; and (c) requested the organizations of the United Nations system to actively contribute to the preparatory process and to the Third United Nations World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction itself,

Recalling its resolutions 64/2 on regional cooperation in the implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters in Asia and the Pacific, 67/11 on strengthening statistical capacity in Asia and the Pacific, and 69/12 on enhancing regional cooperation for building resilience to disasters in Asia and the Pacific,

[1] General Assembly resolution 66/288, annex.

[2] A/CONF.206/6 and Corr.1, chap. I, resolution 2.

Stressing the importance of disaggregated data related to disasters in enabling a comprehensive assessment of the socioeconomic effects of disasters and strengthening evidence-based policymaking at all levels for disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation,

Taking note with appreciation of the efforts of the secretariat, in coordination with other entities of the United Nations system, to promote disaster-related statistics in Asia and the Pacific,

Having considered the report of the Committee on Disaster Risk Reduction on its third session,[3] in particular the recommendation that the secretariat work towards monitoring more effectively the resilience of member States to disasters, including through the development of a core set of disaster-related statistics in close coordination with the Committee on Statistics,

1. *Invites* members and associate members, in collaboration with United Nations bodies and specialized agencies, donors, and international and regional organizations as appropriate, to build and assess their resilience to and capacity to deal with disasters through, among other measures, the improvement of disaster-related statistics,

2. *Decides* to establish an expert group comprising statisticians and disaster risk reduction experts to work towards developing a basic range of disaster-related statistics to be approved by the Commission,

3. *Also decides* that the expert group shall report on the progress made in developing a basic range of disaster-related statistics to the Committee on Statistics in 2014 and the Committee on Disaster Risk Reduction in 2015,

4. *Requests* the Executive Secretary to support the work of the expert group, including by soliciting nominations from Governments, and convening and servicing the meetings of the expert group,

5. *Also requests* the Executive Secretary to inform the Third United Nations World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction of the work initiated by ESCAP towards developing a basic range of disaster-related statistics,

6. *Further requests* the Executive Secretary to report to the Commission at its seventy-second session on the implementation of the present resolution.

Second plenary meeting
23 May 2014

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[3] E/ESCAP/70/14.

B14-000584

United Nations E/ESCAP/RES/70/3

Economic and Social Council

Distr.: Limited
13 August 2014
Original: English

Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

Seventieth session
Agenda item 2(c)

Resolution adopted by the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

70/3. Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011-2020 in Asia and the Pacific

The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific,

Recalling General Assembly resolution 63/227 on the implementation of the Brussels Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010,[1] in which it was decided, inter alia, to convene at a high level in 2011, the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries,

Also recalling its resolution 64/6 on achieving the Millennium Development Goals in the ESCAP region, in which it, inter alia, requested the Executive Secretary to assist countries in the region in achieving the Goals, in particular the least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and Pacific island developing countries,

Further recalling its resolution 68/2 on implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011-2020[2] (Istanbul Programme of Action) in the Asia-Pacific region, in which it, inter alia, requested the Executive Secretary to assist the Asia-Pacific least developed countries in implementing the Regional Road Map for Implementing the Istanbul Programme of Action in the Asian and Pacific Region from 2011 to 2020,[3]

Expressing concern at the slow progress made by the least developed countries in closing development gaps,

Reaffirming that the Istanbul Programme of Action has as an overarching goal to overcome the structural challenges faced by the least developed countries in order to eradicate poverty, achieve internationally agreed development goals and enable graduation from the least developed country category,

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1 A/CONF.191/13, chap. II.

2 *Report of the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, Istanbul, Turkey, 9-13 May 2011* (A/CONF.219/7), chap. II.

3 See E/ESCAP/68/23, annex.

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Reaffirming also that the Istanbul Programme of Action invited the United Nations General Assembly to consider conducting a comprehensive high-level midterm review on the implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action,

Noting the need to further intensify the engagement of the international community in the attainment of the goals and targets agreed in the Istanbul Programme of Action, including the mobilization of additional international support measures and action in favour of the least developed countries and the formation of a renewed partnership between those countries and their development partners,

Reaffirming that the ownership of and the leadership and primary responsibility for their own development lie with the least developed countries,

Noting with appreciation the Asia-Pacific Regional Meeting on the Implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action, which was held in Bangkok from 14 to 16 December 2011, and the Regional Road Map, which was adopted at that meeting and contains a set of capacity development activities and identifies the key agencies and entities that could be involved in delivering those activities,

Also noting with appreciation the kind gesture of the Government of Cambodia, which offered to host an Asia-Pacific regional high-level policy dialogue on the Istanbul Programme of Action for the least developed countries in early 2015,

1. *Urges* the countries in the region and international and regional organizations to accelerate the implementation, as appropriate, of the recommendations contained in the Istanbul Programme of Action and the Regional Road Map in particular, and to participate actively in the Asia-Pacific regional high-level policy dialogue on the Istanbul Programme of Action for the least developed countries;

2. *Requests* the Executive Secretary:

(a) To organize the Asia-Pacific regional high-level policy dialogue on the Istanbul Programme of Action for the least developed countries in early 2015;

(b) To assist the Asia-Pacific least developed countries in implementing the Regional Road Map for Implementing the Istanbul Programme of Action in the Asian and Pacific Region from 2011 to 2020;

(c) To continue to assist Asia-Pacific least developed countries in achieving other internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals;

(d) To submit to the Commission at its seventy-first session a report on the progress achieved in the implementation of the present resolution.

Seventh plenary meeting
8 August 2014

United Nations E/ESCAP/RES/70/4

Economic and Social Council

Distr.: Limited
13 August 2014

Original: English

Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

Seventieth session
Agenda items 3(a) and (b)

Resolution adopted by the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

70/4. Promoting sustainable agricultural development in Asia and the Pacific through technology transfer

The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific,

Recalling General Assembly resolutions 62/190 and 64/197 on agricultural technology for development, and 63/235 on agriculture development and food security,

Also recalling the World Summit on Food Security convened by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations in Rome from 16 to 18 November 2009, and stressing the vital role of international cooperation in advancing and implementing agricultural technologies,

Considering the pressing need to innovate in agriculture and food production in order to address the challenges posed by, inter alia, population growth, urbanization, depletion and scarcity of natural resources, land degradation and desertification, and climate change, and recognizing that sustainable agricultural technologies can greatly contribute to improving food security and rural livelihoods for the current and future generations, achieving conservation and sustainable use of natural resources and helping to adapt agriculture to, and mitigate the negative impact of, climate change,

Recognizing that adaptable, accessible and sustainable agricultural technologies can play an important role in helping member States to alleviate poverty and eradicate hunger, and that there is a need to intensify the efforts of the international community in its attempt to achieve internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals,

Acknowledging the effective and practical approaches taken by some member States to address the issues of agricultural productivity and sustainability through the adoption of appropriate technologies, including agricultural mechanization, and their achievements in meeting most of the Millennium Development Goals,

Welcoming the support provided by the secretariat of the Commission and the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs in

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facilitating technology transfer in sustainable agricultural development through their relevant divisions, subregional offices and regional institutions,

1. *Calls upon* members and associate members:

(a) To make greater efforts to introduce, adapt, develop and disseminate appropriate and cost-effective sustainable agricultural technologies to enable poor rural women, men and youth to increase sustainable agricultural productivity and improve rural livelihoods;

(b) To include sustainable agricultural development as an integral part of their national policies and strategies and to formulate and implement national sustainable agricultural development strategies and/or plans, as appropriate;

2. *Encourages* member States, civil society and public and private institutions to develop partnerships to promote the accessibility of sustainable agricultural technologies to farmers;

3. *Invites* member States to ensure that issues pertinent to sustainable agricultural and rural development are given appropriate consideration in the elaboration of the development agenda beyond 2015;

4. *Requests* the Executive Secretary, in collaboration with United Nations bodies and specialized agencies, international financial institutions, development banks and donor countries:

(a) To continue to support knowledge- and information-sharing and capacity development for member States to pursue sustainable agricultural development;

(b) To continue to assist members and associate members in undertaking North-South cooperation, South-South cooperation and triangular cooperation to facilitate and expedite technology transfer on mutually agreed terms and the uptake of socially, economically and environmentally sustainable technologies;

(c) To continue to support and facilitate, for example through the substantive divisions, subregional offices and regional institutions of ESCAP, regional cooperation in the innovation, development and application of sustainable agricultural technologies, including technologies for agricultural mechanization, and the conservation and sustainable use of natural resources in order to achieve intensification of sustainable food and agricultural production and to reduce rural poverty;

(d) To continue to encourage public-private partnerships and devise creative approaches, such as the organization of dialogue and advocacy activities together or in conjunction with exhibitions and fairs, for the promotion of knowledge- and information-sharing, policy dialogue, joint and collaborative research and development, technology transfer on mutually agreed upon terms, as well as business development;

5. *Also requests* the Executive Secretary to report to the Commission at its seventy-second session on the implementation of the present resolution.

Seventh plenary meeting
8 August 2014

B14-00922

United Nations E/ESCAP/RES/70/5

Economic and Social Council

Distr.: Limited
13 August 2014

Original: English

Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

Seventieth session
Agenda item 3(b)

Resolution adopted by the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

70/5. Strengthening regional cooperation and capacity for enhanced trade and investment in support of sustainable development

The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific,

Recalling the 2005 World Summit Outcome[1] and the United Nations Millennium Declaration[2] as well as other relevant declarations adopted at international summits and conferences, and relevant General Assembly resolutions[3] emphasizing the role and importance of trade and investment as engines for economic growth and development and the role and importance of the private sector, in particular small and medium-sized enterprises, in this regard,

Recalling in particular General Assembly resolution 66/288 adopting the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, from 20 to 22 June 2012, entitled "The future we want",[4] which distinguishes the economic, social and environmental aspects of sustainability and their interlinkages, recognizes the regional dimension and role of the regional commissions in promoting sustainable development and acknowledges that the active participation of the private sector can contribute to the achievement of sustainable development, including through the important tool of public-private partnerships,

Recalling the Almaty Declaration and Almaty Programme of Action: Addressing the Special Needs of Landlocked Developing Countries within a New Global Framework for Transit Transport Cooperation for Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries[5] adopted by the International Ministerial

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1 General Assembly resolution 60/1.

2 General Assembly resolution 55/2.

3 See, for instance, General Assembly resolutions 64/192, 64/223, 65/142, 65/175, 66/185, 67/202 and 67/225.

4 General Assembly resolution 66/288, annex.

5 See *Report of the International Ministerial Conference of Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries and Donor Countries and International Financial and Development Institutions on Transit Transport Cooperation, Almaty, Kazakhstan, 28 and 29 August 2003* (A/CONF.202/3), annexes I and II.

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Conference of Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries and Donor Countries and International Financial and Development Institutions on Transit Transport Cooperation, held in Almaty, Kazakhstan, from 25 to 29 August 2003, and taking note of the Vientiane Consensus[6] adopted by the Euro-Asian Final Regional Review of the Almaty Programme of Action on 7 March 2013, all of which emphasize the importance of trade, trade facilitation and investment for the development of landlocked developing countries and the need for technical assistance in these areas,

Recalling also the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011-2020[7] adopted by the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, held in Istanbul, Turkey, from 9 to 13 May 2011, which recognizes the important role of partnerships with the private sector for promoting entrepreneurship, generating employment and investment, increasing revenue potential, developing new technologies and enabling high, sustained, inclusive and equitable economic growth in least developed countries, and the key role of good governance at all levels and an enabling business environment in this respect,

Recalling further its resolution 69/3 and the adoption of the Bangkok Declaration on the United Nations Development Agenda for Asia-Pacific Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States, which recognizes the regional dimensions of development and the need for strong and additional commitments and actions with regard to official development assistance, debt, trade and technology transfer on mutually agreed upon terms,

Recalling the Bangkok Declaration on Regional Economic Cooperation and Integration in Asia and the Pacific adopted by the Ministerial Conference on Regional Cooperation and Integration in Asia and the Pacific,[8] held in Bangkok from 17 to 20 December 2013, which resolved to work together to pursue enhanced regional economic cooperation and integration in Asia and the Pacific, including in the area of moving towards the formation of an integrated market,

Recalling also its resolution 62/6 on managing globalization through strengthened regional cooperation in trade and investment,

Recognizing that trade and investment continue to be major driving forces for economic growth, poverty eradication, disaster risk reduction and achievement of internationally agreed development goals,

Recognizing also the need for developing countries to balance sources of economic growth to enhance resilience and, in this regard, the need for them to diversify markets and tradable products and services, with due regard to enhancing trade and investment among themselves,

Noting that businesses, including private sector businesses, are principal agents for conducting trade and investment,

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[6] See E/ESCAP/69/1, annex.

[7] See *Report of the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, Istanbul, Turkey, 9-13 May 2011* (A/CONF.219/7) (United Nations publication, Sales No. 11.II.A.1), chap. II.

[8] See E/ESCAP/70/7.

Recognizing with appreciation the increased engagement of the private sector in promoting sustainable development through the ESCAP Business Advisory Council and its Sustainable Business Network,

Recognizing the need for improved market access and reducing at- and behind-the-border barriers to trade and investment and, generally, barriers encountered by businesses, in particular small and medium-sized enterprises, in the overall conduct of their commercial activities, including trade and investment,

Recalling its resolution 68/3 on enabling paperless trade and the cross-border recognition of electronic data and documents for sustainable intraregional trade facilitation,

Emphasizing that knowledge and innovation are important determinants of increased productivity and competitiveness of small and medium-sized enterprises, and that there is a need for the development of science-based knowledge and technology, particularly agricultural technology, including through the transfer of technology on mutually agreed terms,

Emphasizing also the need for trade and investment to be sustainable, including the need to encourage businesses to adopt and practise internationally recognized principles of responsible business practices, including those of the United Nations Global Compact, in order for trade and investment to contribute to sustainable development,

Recognizing the need for enhanced capacity of Governments and businesses to expand trade and investment in support of sustainable development,

Recognizing also that regional cooperation is essential in enhancing trade and investment, in particular among developing countries,

Reaffirming the importance of a universal, rules-based, open, non-discriminatory and equitable multilateral trading system for enhanced trade and investment flows,

Recognizing the progress made in the multilateral trade negotiations under the Doha Round with the adoption of the Bali Ministerial Declaration and decisions by the Ninth World Trade Organization Ministerial Conference, held in Bali, Indonesia, on 7 December 2013,

Also recognizing the potential contribution of regional trade and investment agreements to enhanced trade and investment flows and that such agreements are important modalities for regional cooperation and can be building blocks of the multilateral trading system, without prejudice to member States' commitment to, implementation of and participation in past, present and planned international agreements and negotiations in trade and investment within the context of the World Trade Organization and the multilateral trading system,

Having considered the report of the Committee on Trade and Investment on its third session,[9]

1. *Encourages* member States:

(a) To strengthen national and regional initiatives, programmes, projects and other efforts to promote sustainable development of the Asia-

[9] E/ESCAP/70/9.

Pacific region through enhanced trade and investment, and to, wherever appropriate, endeavour to strengthen regional cooperation among member States, the United Nations development system and other development partners in promoting sustainable development through enhanced trade and investment;

(b) To allocate the required financial resources for the purpose outlined in paragraph 1(a) above and the paragraph below;

2. *Designates,* without prejudice to the outcome of the ongoing reforms of the conference structure of ESCAP and within the framework of the overall terms of reference of the Committee on Trade and Investment, as contained in Commission resolution 69/1, the Committee on Trade and Investment as the appropriate body to closely monitor and guide the directions and requests contained in paragraphs 1 above and 4 below and draft regional action plans on specific trade and investment issues for implementation by national Governments and the secretariat alike, subject to a periodic review by a conference at the ministerial level;

3. *Notes* the support of the Committee on Trade and Investment[10] on the establishment of a permanent bureau and its request to the secretariat to undertake a feasibility study on such a bureau and to prepare draft terms of reference of the bureau for review by member States;

4. *Requests* the Executive Secretary:

(a) To study the feasibility of convening every four years, starting in 2016, a conference at the ministerial level to review recent developments and adopt regional action plans in the area of trade and investment and other related areas[11] for implementation by Governments of ESCAP members and associate members and by the secretariat of ESCAP, and to submit to the Committee on Trade and Investment at its next session a report with recommendations on the convening of a ministerial-level conference;

(b) To expand policy-oriented and evidence-based analytical work in the area of trade and investment for sustainable development in the ESCAP region, including in order to support the normative work of ESCAP;

(c) To effectively disseminate the findings of its research and analysis through appropriate websites and publications, in particular through the annual *Asia-Pacific Trade and Investment Report*;

(d) To continue analysis of preferential trade agreements, including through the Asia-Pacific Trade and Investment Agreements Database;

(e) To expand technical assistance and to encourage ESCAP regional members, and where appropriate, regional associate members, in building their human and institutional capacity, in particular in the following areas:

(i) Undertaking evidence-based policy-oriented research and analysis in the area of trade and investment, including research with a view towards identifying modalities for the consolidation of regional trade agreements as building blocks of the multilateral trading system;

(ii) Negotiating, concluding and implementing trade and investment agreements, including accession to the World Trade Organization of

[10] E/ESCAP/70/9, para. 12.

[11] These other related areas are covered by the subprogramme on trade and investment and comprise: business and development, including responsible business practices; technology transfer; and sustainable agricultural mechanization.

those countries not yet members of that organization, upon request of the member countries;

(iii) Formulating and implementing policies in support of trade, investment and business development within the context of overall national sustainable development goals;

(iv) Formulating and implementing policies in support of trade facilitation, promotion and facilitation of foreign direct investment, strengthening national capacities in science, technology and innovation; strengthening the competitiveness of small and medium-sized enterprises, with special focus on such enterprises in rural areas and those owned or managed by women or youth; and the adoption of responsible business practices by businesses in accordance with the principles of the Global Compact and other internationally recognized principles of responsible business practices;

(f) To continue the promotion of regional cooperation with a view to achieve higher levels of regional economic integration through enhanced intraregional trade, investment and technology flows for sustainable development, including through the following modalities:

(i) Expanding membership and deepening and broadening commitments within the framework of the Asia-Pacific Trade Agreement while studying the feasibility of strengthening the linkages of that Agreement with other regional trade agreements;

(ii) Strengthening the Asia-Pacific Research and Training Network on Trade and its activities;

(iii) Strengthening the United Nations Network of Experts for Paperless Trade in Asia and the Pacific and its activities;

(iv) Strengthening the Asian and Pacific Centre for Transfer of Technology, with focus on its capacity to promote the development of national and subnational innovation systems and the transfer of technology, inter alia, environmentally sustainable and renewable energy technologies on mutually agreed upon terms, including with a view to supporting the existing regional technology bank;[12]

(v) Strengthening the Centre for Sustainable Agricultural Mechanization, including its capacity to establish and service the Asian and Pacific Network for Testing of Agricultural Machinery and promote the adoption and implementation at the national level of sustainable agricultural mechanization strategies;

(g) To encourage public-private partnerships and dialogue on issues related to trade and investment for sustainable development through such modalities as the Asia-Pacific Business Forum, the Asia-Pacific Trade Facilitation Forum, and the ESCAP Business Advisory Council and its Sustainable Business Network;

(h) In undertaking trade and investment capacity-building assistance, to accord priority to the special needs of least developed countries, landlocked developing countries, countries with economies in transition and small island developing States;

(i) To take all necessary measures to mobilize the funds required for the implementation of the above-mentioned requests from within existing resources, supplemented as necessary by voluntary contributions and through partnerships with entities, including from the Asian Development Bank and the private sector;

[12] General Assembly resolution 67/220, para. 21.

(j) To strengthen cooperation with relevant regional and global partner organizations, to the extent possible, in the implementation of the above-mentioned requests with a view to utilizing resources efficiently, achieving synergies in outputs and impacts and avoiding unnecessary duplication of work;

(k) To report to the Commission at its seventy-second session on the implementation of the present resolution.

Seventh plenary meeting
8 August 2014

United Nations E/ESCAP/RES/70/6

Economic and Social Council

Distr.: Limited
13 August 2014

Original: English

Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

Seventieth session
Agenda item 3(b)

Resolution adopted by the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

70/6. Implementation of the decision of the Ad Hoc Intergovernmental Meeting on a Regional Arrangement for the Facilitation of Cross-border Paperless Trade

The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific,

Noting that the Ad Hoc Intergovernmental Meeting on a Regional Arrangement for the Facilitation of Cross-border Paperless Trade was held in Bangkok from 22 to 24 April 2014, in accordance with the mandates contained in Commission resolution 68/3 and in the report of the Committee on Trade and Investment on its third session,

Welcoming the successful outcome of the Meeting,[1]

Noting that the work of the interim steering group on cross-border paperless trade facilitation would not duplicate but complement the work being done in relation to the implementation of the World Trade Organization Trade Facilitation Agreement,

1. *Endorses* the recommendation of the Meeting to establish an interim intergovernmental steering group on cross-border paperless trade facilitation;

2. *Requests* the Executive Secretary to support and facilitate the establishment and operation of the interim intergovernmental steering group on cross-border paperless trade facilitation in accordance with the terms of reference contained in section I.B of the report of the Ad Hoc Intergovernmental Meeting on a Regional Arrangement for the Facilitation of Cross-border Paperless Trade;[2]

3. Also requests the Executive Secretary to report to the Commission annually on the progress made in the implementation of the present resolution until the work of the steering group has been completed.

Seventh plenary meeting
8 August 2014

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[1] E/ESCAP/70/31.

[2] Ibid.

B14-00930 (E) TP180814

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